

# Around the House



NEWS FROM THE HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Volume 6, Issue 3

May/June, 2009

## Energy Efficiency Upgrades for Public Housing!

In the last edition of Around the House, energy efficiency improvements to Public Housing high rises and garden apartments were featured in the newsletter. In this issue, the news gets even better. In March, the Housing Authority learned that funds were being made available to expand the energy improvements to the single family properties.

As a part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the Wichita Housing Authority will receive over \$1.2M in new Capital Funds. The Housing Authority Board has approved

the staff's plan to use these funds to replace the natural gas heating units in the single family properties and in the garden apartments. These new units will have an energy efficiency rating of 95%.



There is yet more good news from Public Housing. After maintaining the single family inventory at 349 for many years, your Housing Authority has completed construction on three new single family homes. The homes are located in northeast Wichita. These new three-bedroom homes are ADA accessible and energy efficient. They are expected to receive certificates of occupancy in

May and are being offered to persons on the Public Housing waiting list.



While this is all very good news, our property improvements will only work as long as our tenants treat them with care. We recently had two fires in our high rises which were attributable to persons who were not paying attention while cooking. Fortunately there were no injuries but the Fire Department was called in both cases—and we have had to make repairs to the units. So please pay attention while you are cooking—and never leave your unit with food cooking or with your stove or oven turned on!

## More American Recovery & Reinvestment Act Programs

More programs are being developed from the ARRA, which are designed to assist persons who are struggling to make ends meet in this difficult economy. The Housing and Community Services Department will administer a new Homelessness Prevention and

Rapid Re-Housing program. The program is designed to help people who are facing eviction, to be able to stay in their homes. It will also help find homes for people who are homeless. Details are still being developed for this program which will start some-

time this summer. The City's Career Development office is also making plans for a program to help low income persons secure and maintain meaningful employment. Watch for details on both of these important programs, in upcoming newsletters!

Spring is  
nature's way of  
saying,  
"Let's Party!"  
- Robin Williams



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# Around the House

## From the Director



**Mary K. Vaughn** invites readers to submit questions related to department programs for a new feature: **Ask the Director!**

I have not received any questions for Ask the Director, so I decided to ask myself a question! What are the two hottest topics in our city and our country? My answer is—the economy and the environment. I would like to share my thoughts on both.

Our country is in an economic downturn but hope is on the horizon. One thing the economy has forced everyone to do, is something that people with limited means have had to do on a daily basis. We are all now forced to make

choices as to what we buy and when, as well as how we handle our personal affairs.

While this makes some people uncomfortable, it is probably a good habit to form. As recipients of Housing Authority housing assistance, it is more important than ever that you adhere to the policies and guidelines which apply to your program. Now is not the time to gamble with your family's housing!

In the last newsletter it was announced that Public Housing high rises are going "green".

In this issue we are announcing upcoming energy improvements for Public Housing single family homes. In addition this newsletter provides two new energy tips for you!

Your Housing Authority is committed to making a difference in the way we use our natural resources and we hope you do too.

I look forward to answering YOUR questions in the next newsletter!

*Mary K. Vaughn*

## ENERGY TIP:

SET YOUR AIR  
CONDITIONER  
TEMPERATURE  
AS HIGH AS  
COMFORTABLY  
POSSIBLE DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS

## Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

The City of Wichita will soon be working closely with Sedgewick County on yet another program that has received funding from the federal government. The goal of the Neighborhood Stabilization program is to identify properties which have been vacant due to foreclosure or poor condition, acquire them, make necessary repairs and improvements—and then sell

them to homebuyers. Once it starts, this program will have dual impacts on our community.

First it will improve the look of neighborhoods by correcting physical conditions. This will in turn lead to the stabilization of the neighborhood—it will have increased 'curb appeal'.

The second impact will be to create more affordable hous-

ing for persons who would like to own their own home. It is important to remember that when the City provides homebuyer assistance, the buyer must have a standard mortgage, to reduce the possibility of unnecessary foreclosures. Thus, it provides stability for the homebuyer as well.

Watch this newsletter for more details on the NSP!!



## Our Employee Values

- ◆ Respectfully helping others achieve safe, affordable housing
- ◆ Empowering people and improving neighborhoods
- ◆ Making a difference—right where people live
- ◆ Investing in people with their housing needs

## Employee News!

Despite the City's slow down on hiring, we were able to fill an important accounting position in the Housing and Community Services Department. Ms. Kim Davis joined the department in March, to fill the position formerly held by retiree Addison DeAllie. Kim joins the department with many years experience in

accounting and will be a great asset to the fiscal team. Kim transferred from the City Information Technology department which means she knows a lot about computers too! We're glad to have Kim on board!

P.S. If you've ever paid your City water bill online, you've

seen Kim's image—pointing you to the steps to follow to make your payment!



## Section 8 Administrative Plan Changes

The Wichita Housing Authority Board recently approved changes to the Section 8 program's Administrative Plan. Following are highlights of the changes:

The Section 8 program will now give a preference to people who are working, when calling families from their waiting lists. The Public Housing program has had this preference in place for several months. In addition, persons who are unable to work because of a disability, will

also be given a preference on the Section 8 waiting list.

The Section 8 Administrative Plan also includes clarification and reinforcement of the policy which requires the Section 8 program to send correspondence to voucher holders, to the address which the program is subsidizing. It is the responsibility of the voucher holder to ensure that their mail is accepted at the subsidized address. Failure to do so may result in termination of assistance.

Another item which was added clarifies that when a voucher holder or applicant has appealed a decision regarding their assistance to the hearing officer, that is the last level of appeal.

To repeat comments earlier in this newsletter, it is important to safeguard your housing assistance whether in Public Housing or with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, by following all programs rules and expectations.

Family Self-Sufficiency  
Workshops  
Atwater Neighborhood  
City Hall  
2755 E 19th  
6:00 pm  
  
May 14  
June 18

Section 8 Homeowners  
Alumni Meetings  
Atwater Neighborhood  
City Hall  
2755 E 19th  
5:30 pm  
  
June 22

## Section 8 Tenants and Landlords: Inspection Extension Policy

### Extension Requests for Failed Inspection Items

Section 8 Division applies the following policies and procedures for receiving and processing requests for extending Housing Quality Standards compliance deadlines. The following provides details on conditions under which extensions will be approved for Section 8 client landlords.

- Extensions will not be approved without good reason such as: order for

parts are pending – must have documentation; inclement weather or contractor delay due to back ordering of parts.

- All extension requests must be submitted in writing, emailed or faxed to the Section 8 office prior to the date repairs are to be completed.

Extension requests must be received seven (7) days prior to any scheduled inspection. Verbal extensions will not be

approved.

Extensions will not be approved for life threatening violations requiring corrections within (24) hours.

Extension request forms may be picked up at the Section 8 office or at the Department website at: <http://www.wichita.gov/cityoffices/housing/section8>

### ENERGY TIP:

TREES PLANTED ON THE SOUTH AND WEST SIDES OF A PROPERTY WILL KEEP THE HOUSE/ APARTMENT COOL IN THE SUMMER AND ALLOW THE SUN TO SHINE IN THE WINDOWS IN THE WINTER!



## HAP Payment Schedule

MONTH	CHECK MAIL DATE
May, 2009	April 28, 2009
June, 2009	May 29, 2009
July, 2009	June 30, 2009

Don't forget to sign up for direct deposit of Housing Assistance Payments for fast access to your funds! Go to [www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov) and click on the Finance Department. From there you will see a link for Automated Clearinghouse (ACH). Click there and follow the 3 simple steps.

**Mission .. To provide housing & related services to benefit the citizens & neighborhoods of Wichita**

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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**We're On the Web!**  
[www.wichita.gov/cityoffices/housing](http://www.wichita.gov/cityoffices/housing)



**NEWS  
YOU CAN  
USE!!**

## DO YOU NEED A JOB?? ARE YOU 14-24 YRS OLD??

If you are between the ages of 14 and 24, the Workforce Alliance just may have a summer job for you! The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provides employment assistance for youth residing within Local Area IV (which consists of Sedgwick, Butler, Cowley, Sumner, Harper and Kingman counties) who are between the ages of **14 and 24 years old** or enrollment with summer employment opportunities and work readiness skills. Participants will have the opportunity to work at one of a variety of entry-level jobs at government agencies, non-profit organizations, museums, hospitals, parks or area

schools.

There are three primary goals to the SYEP program:

**Provide area youth with job readiness training and basic workplace skills**

**Stimulate the local economy by providing youth with spendable income**

**Create employment opportunities for youth that may not have otherwise been possible**

Applicants must meet income criteria and need assistance in finding a job.

For more information go to the Workforce Alliance office at 150 N. Main, or visit the summer youth website at:

**[www.workforce-ks.com](http://www.workforce-ks.com)**

click the tab at the top for **"Young People"**

**Hurry—the deadline is May 30, 2009!**

